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ABSTRACT

This book develops an alternative account of Canada's operation of Indian residential schools and provides recommendations for undoing what has been done. Derived from a report on residential schooling submitted to the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples in October 1994, the book discusses the language and rhetoric surrounding residential schools and argues that existing accounts in various media obscure and misinform about the facts and their interpretation. Rather than undoing the harm done by Indian residential schools, present-day accounts maintain and extend that abominable era. Chapters are: (1) Unanswered Questions/Unquestioned Answers (the "standard" account); (2) Ground Sternly Disputed (critical analysis of "slippery language" related to motives, "mistakes," and apologies); (3) The Events (testimony before Royal Commissions, physical and psychological abuses in Indian residential schools, unsuitable living conditions, church and governmental inaction); (4) ...and They Call It Peace (genocide in Canada, cultural genocide as an answer to the "Indian problem"); (5) Residential School Syndrome (education as a political weapon, residential schools as "total institutions," long-term consequences of the residential school experience, the invalid notion of a diagnosable "residential school syndrome"); (6) The Forest and the Trees (methodological individualism--focusing blame on individual perpetrators and "therapy" on individual victims); and (7) Recommendations (concerning truthful investigation, education of the Canadian public, settlement of claims, Aboriginal control of public agencies impacting them). Contains references in extensive notes. Appendices contain the United Nations Genocide Convention and six papers by Roland Chrisjohn and others about residential schooling, related research, psychological assessment, psychological imperialism, authentic resistance, and intelligence research. (SV)